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CONCERNING SERBIAN EMIGRANTS

During the third week in February 1945 Neubacher, German Ambassador to Yugoslavia in Vienna, is said to have stated that the general situation concerning Serbian emigrants might be characterized as follows:

Serbian emigration had definitely shifted to center in the coastal region where decisive battles against communism provided an important protective operation for the Germans. This radical battle status, along with the strong personalities of Ljotic and Djulic, who had been cooperating under German leadership with the Mihailovic formation of the active Jevdjovic\* had quite automatically shelved the old Nedic Government in which timid culprits had the upper hand.

Draja Mihailovic was completely aware of the importance of the coastal region. He was using it to negotiate for closer relationship and discussion. Cincar Markovic and Avanc\*\*, loyal collaborators until the present, had been working in activist \*\*\* territory also, about which Neubacher stated that he had no misgivings. Especially there, a man such as the sober, experienced Cincar Markovic, who was undoubtedly loyal to the Germans was to be considered as a powerful, permanent agent.

Considering this unequivocal situation, clarification in favor of the Activists who battled the Serbians under Tito without compromise, it was necessary to set up a center of political activity and communications in the coastal region. This was also important to Neubacher's office, since developments there were far more the responsibility of the Foreign Office than developments in the barren milieu of Kitzbühel could ever be. In the future Neubacher's office could not be content with Liaison Service Gendarmerie or with officers who had had Wehr training, but must appear in this region in the form of an official branch office. He, therefore, had sent a high official with a wireless operator and an assistant to Trieste. They would go in the interests of close continued cooperation both with higher SS and police leaders detailed to supervise Serbian military and administrative units and with local offices of the Chief Commissar located there.

\* Unidentified; this is a familiar Serbian name, however.

\*\* Unidentified.

\*\*\* Mihailovic chetnik groups

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Final location was being withheld pending a personal check by Neubacher.

Neubacher is said to have proposed to take the trip for which responsible authorities there had been pleading constantly through the Foreign Minister as soon as official conditions permitted. The trip would include Trieste and the vicinity of Fiume. The purpose of the trip would be exhaustive discussions with higher SS and police officials detailed to a certain "Formation", to visit the operational area of the Serbian formation, on-the-spot talks with Ljotic, Djuić and Jevdjević on the question of their future use in the Serbian theater, a study of the morale and discipline of the various fighting groups, and the acquisition of a clear, personal impression of the reactions of the civilian population in this area to date.

Neubacher stated that he had recommended that Patriarch Gavrilović\* visit this anti-bolshevistic formation. Gavrilović obviously wanted to answer the appearance in Moscow of his Serbian rival, Josip, with such a move, and to demonstrate his sole legal patriarchy. Neubacher thought such an appearance might have very strong repercussions on resistance in the Serbian theater.

Recapitulating, Neubacher stated that he was certain that it was very important to win the Serbian formations in the coastal region politically. In case the Germans ever moved into the Serbian theater again an easily strengthened and very strong fighting force could be put in motion from this area, a force whose present chief supporters - Ljotic and Djuić - had a record behind them of long open cooperation with the Germans. Of course, the whole war picture would determine whether these groups would continue to fight against bolshevism with the Germans or offer themselves to the British and Americans, if they considered the German cause lost. However, even in this case, a maximum of personal ties was desirable, in order to stop these forces from turning against the Germans.

\* one of the heads of the Orthodox Church in Croatia

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